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THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE vs. THE FIGURATIVE.

The question how the word of God is to be understood is one of such deep and vital importance, affecting in its results the integrity of the Holy Scriptures, and the nature of Revealed truth, that it cannot be too carefully considered by any one sincerely anxious to know the mind of God. Especially should those who are solemnly set apart by the laying on of hands to declare the Will of God to men, enquire whether they are proclaiming God's truth when they open their mouths to speak in his name, or whether they are simply giving utterance to the meanings which fanciful yet devout men have put upon the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. It is possible for a "Steward of the mysteries of God," to take the word of God for his text, and yet in the explanation of that word, to convey ideas which God never intended to express. This can be done in several ways:—

1. By inflating the language of Scripture and giving it what is called a *fulness of meaning* which is sometimes inexhaustible. Take for example, the explanation which is often given of the passage in Zech. xiv. 7: "It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." The simple and only truth which this expression conveys is that which the language plainly imports, viz. that in the evening of that day when the Lord shall go forth to fight against the nations assembled against Jerusalem, ver. 2, 3: and his feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, ver. 4: that in that day the light shall not be clear nor dark, ver. 6: *i. e.* it shall be a twilight during the whole day. But at evening time, the part of the day when the natural darkness always commences it shall be light. An unusual occurrence indeed, but not more so than the other marvellous events occurring at the same time; as the rending of the Mount of Olives, ver. 3: the elevation of a large portion of land south of Jerusalem, ver. 10: the plague upon the invading army, ver. 12: &c.

Now how have many Divines interpreted this expression? Turning away from the *real truth* expressed, and overlooking the *only idea* intended to be conveyed, they have expended their whole strength in illustrating some sentiment which they call the doctrine contained in the text: e. g. that in seasons of great darkness in the Church, God will shine upon her and be unto her a light in darkness. And the celebrated Ralph Erskine, called the Prince of Scottish divines, has, in a sermon on these words, mentioned twelve signs whereby we may know when this evening time has arrived in the church. But the question arises, what has all this to do with the passage under consideration, which predicts a natural phenomenon to occur in connexion with several others at a particular time, and has no reference whatever to the spiritual state of Christendom, or the private exercise of believers. However true

the sentiment may be in spiritual things, that a believer walking in darkness shall see light, yet it is no more taught in this passage than it is in the declaration that "there was darkness over all the land of Egypt, but the children of Israel had light in their dwellings:" a passage which has also been spiritualized in the same manner as the former from Zech. By impregnating in this manner the word of God with our own fancies, we may bring forth a progeny of illegitimate propositions having all the seeming characteristics of divine verities, with this important difference however, that they were never conceived by the Holy Ghost from whom alone all revealed truth emanates. Another method of *making* the word of God teach what God himself has not declared, is,

2. By condensing it, by generalizing large portions which a preconceived theory will not permit us to receive according to the plain and obvious meaning, and finding only *one great truth*, wrapped up, as it is sometimes expressed, in several external folds. How much real truth is suppressed and hid from the Church of God by this method of exposition, it would alarm the unsuspecting to discover. The dupes of this principle of interpretation are informed that the Book of Revelation is nothing more than a sublime riddle (as a Professor of a Theological Seminary recently informed his students while reading it) and that the main scope of the whole book was simply to give prominence to ONE GRAND IDEA, viz. that truth would finally triumph, and iniquity would be overthrown; the seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, and two witnesses, being only as the drapery of a parable, to adorn and embellish this Grand Idea, the moral of the tale.

On the same principle of interpretation the detailed description of a temple with its walls and gates and chambers and windows and altars and ordinances and sanctuary, and waters issuing from under it, running into the Dead Sea, and the division of the land among the twelve tribes, with a variety of other things, extending through the last nine chapters of Ezekiel, means nothing *in particular*, but only expresses ONE GRAND IDEA, viz. the glory of Christianity in the latter days. Thus a truth which might have been fully expressed in less than five verses is *dubiously* declared in as many hundred; we say *dubiously*, for such is the difficulty of interpreting *symbolically* the *whole* of this vision that the majority of commentators acknowledge that it is extremely doubtful to what the vision really does relate. They *suppose* it relates to the glory of the Church in the latter days, but it *may perhaps* refer also to some peculiar polity to be established among the Jews at their return to the land of their Fathers.

A very important question now arises; If the word of God may be inflated and condensed in the above described manner; if it may be contracted or expanded to suit the fancies or theories of men, (one single expression containing almost a volume of truths; and again, several chapters expressing only one single idea,) what possible rule can be given to determine what the words do really mean, or when we have exhausted the fulness, or overdrawn the emptiness of that which is written? If for example the expression of Zech. xiv. 7: "It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light," means any thing more than what is there simply and plainly expressed, how much more does it mean? to what lengths may we go in attaching meanings to it? On the other hand, if the whole of Ezek., from chapter 40th to the end, containing nine chapters, expresses only one grand truth, how shall we know what that truth is? for it is not declared. How can we determine when the prophecy is ful-

filled? If we take the language in its ordinary acceptation, then we may *certainly* know when the prophecy is fulfilled, viz. when the events there described do literally occur: but if we turn away from this simple rule of interpretation and *suppose* that something else is intended than that which the language naturally imports, we immediately open a door for the indulgence of fancy and visionary speculation and theorizing which always ends in the adoption of a system of doctrine or prophecy at variance with the truth of the Most High.

[To be Continued.]

MESSIAH'S REIGN ON THE EARTH.

The strange notions which men in general entertain respecting the kingdom of the Messiah must be traced to a neglect of the sacred Scriptures; for I do not find in them one passage to support the common opinion of the spiritual reign, but every where do I find the future manifestation of Christ as King declared in language which none can gainsay or resist, without doing the most awful violence to the sacred text.

In treating on the kingdom of our Lord, I shall begin with that memorable declaration of David which he uttered at the close of his eventful reign. The passage to which I refer is contained in 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4: "He that ruleth over men must be just"—or, as some read the Hebrew, 'He that ruleth in manhood is the Just One, ruling in the fear of God; and as the light of morning shall rise the sun, a morning unclouded, shining with splendour, with showers like grass from the earth.' Such is the character of Him whom David by the Spirit declared should hereafter sit upon his throne; and such the description of his reign. The peace and glory of David's reign were frequently interrupted by internal commotions, and by family afflictions; but he here speaks of a reign which should be *unclouded*—without any thing ever to interrupt its peace and joy—a glorious reign, *shining with splendour*. Solomon's reign answered in some measure to this, and as a type it served to shew forth the power and glory and unchangeableness of that kingdom which the Son of David will ere long establish on the redeemed earth.

Let us, then, inquire, First, of whom David here speaks; "He that ruleth over men is the Just One."

This expression can leave no doubt upon our minds that the Person here referred to is the Lord Jesus Christ; for he is the only person in the Scriptures that bears this title; and there is no one besides him, either in heaven or on earth, to whom it can possibly apply. St. Peter in the iiii of the Acts applies it to Christ: speaking of the crucifixion of the Son of God, he says, "but ye denied *the Holy One and the Just*." In like manner does Stephen speak in the vii chapter: "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of *the coming of the Just One*, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and the murderers." St. Paul also, in the xxi chapter, speaking of his conversion, says, that while he was in Damascus, Ananias came to him, and said, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that *Just One*, and

shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." Here, as in the foregoing passages, the emphatic expression, *that Just One*, is proved to be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, whom Paul beheld with his eyes and heard speak on his way to Damascus. We could adduce many other passages in proof of this, and shew in a variety of ways that none but Jesus is entitled to the appellation of the Just One. But, taking this for granted on all hands, we shall proceed to describe his kingly office, and to shew from the holy Scriptures that this same Jesus shall yet sit upon the throne of his father David, and reign in Mount Zion, and before his ancients gloriously.

1. *The Lord Jesus Christ was anointed unto the threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King.* Into the two first he has entered fully, but unto the last he has not yet attained. It would be most absurd to deny that he shall appear, and be manifested as King, as truly and as literally as he fulfilled his prophetic and priestly offices. As Prophet, he appeared on the earth and taught the people, and their hearts rejoiced at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth: as the great High Priest of our profession, he literally offered up a spotless sacrifice unto God, well-pleasing and acceptable in his sight; and finally, in the character of Priest he passed into the heavens, even into the most holy place, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us: and when he has fulfilled his mediatorial work he shall as truly assume his *kingly* character, and take unto himself his great power and reign. Although he is anointed to his kingly office, he has not yet entered upon it; nor will he, till the death of him of whom Saul was the type, even Antichrist, the man of sin, who shall fall in the battle of Armageddon. If Jesus was fully entered on his kingly office he would be seated on *his throne*; but as yet *he has none*: as it is written in the cxth Psalm, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, *till I make thine enemies thy footstool.*" Now, Jesus sits upon the throne of his Father, but hereafter he shall sit upon his *own* throne. Our Lord himself fixes the time of his accession to the throne of his kingdom to *his second coming*: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, *THEN* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." And that our Lord is not now seated on this throne is most evident from another passage, which reads thus: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in *my throne*; even as I also overcame, and *am* set down with my Father on *his throne.*" It is most evident, then, that Christ at present acts the part of a *Mediator*; that he is now *interceding* for us, as the High Priest of our profession; and that he is not yet entered on his kingly office, nor seated on his throne.

2. *The Scriptures declare, in the plainest language, and in the most unequivocal terms, that the Lord Jesus Christ, who now appears in the presence of God for us, shall descend from heaven and reign on this redeemed earth as a King.* In proceeding to lay before you my readers, some of the passages of Scripture bearing on this point, let me entreat of you to lay aside for a moment all pre-conceived opinions, and to *hear what the Lord saith*: and settle it first in your hearts, that

all that the Lord hath spoken shall be accomplished; not one word shall fail thereof. Without this, the Bible is an empty book. Take away the letter of the Bible—in other words, say that every sentence shall not receive a literal and exact fulfilment—and you divest it at once of its spirit, its power, and its life; you destroy the hopes of the Christian, and become the abettors of infidelity! Oh, let us contend for it, and let us bind it to our hearts as a most precious truth never to be forgotten, that the whole Bible shall be most literally and substantially fulfilled, and not one jot or tittle of it shall fail.

The first passage to which we shall direct our attention is contained in the ixth chapter of Isaiah: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father (or the Father of the everlasting age), The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom*, to order it and establish it from henceforth, even for ever." Now this is a most comprehensive prophecy: it begins at the birth of our Lord, and carries us on to the period of his second advent. We know how literally the first part of this prophecy has been fulfilled, for it is an historical fact that the Virgin Mary did conceive and bear a Son: and all that we now contend for is, that the remaining part of this prophecy shall be fulfilled in the same way as the former; that Jesus shall be manifested as the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of peace; and that he shall sit upon the throne of his father David—of David after the flesh. Some say that they believe the former because it is *accomplished*: we believe the latter because it is *promised*. This is faith, the other is not faith. Some say, that Christ now sits upon the throne of David: but "heaven is *my* throne," saith the Lord, and how then was David's throne in heaven? Others suppose that the indwelling of the Holy Ghost is meant by these expressions: but when, I would ask again, was David's throne erected in the believer's heart? Oh! we do not so interpret other passages of Scripture. Nor does the Holy Spirit so interpret this. God, speaking by the Prophet Amos, says, "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old." See also Micah iv. 6—13, Luke i, 33, and the other parallel passages. —If we turn to the xxi st of Ezekiel, we shall find that the different changes in the governments of the world are but as so many preparatory steps which ultimately lead to the reign of the Just One: "And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until *He* come whose right it is, and I will give it him." Although, therefore, the Son of David has not yet taken possession of the land, according to the everlasting covenant made with the seed of Abraham (Gen. xv. 18, with Gal. iii. 16), the promise

of the Almighty Father still standeth good. Accordingly, in the Apocalypse (which is a shewing forth of the coming of the Just One), when the period of his manifestation is arrived, "great voices are heard in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."—If we turn to the Prophet Daniel, we shall find it declared that the fourth monarchy, which is the Roman, and which we now behold in its last and degenerate state, shall be succeeded only by the reign of Christ. In the iiid chap. 44th ver. it is thus written: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." The same truths are repeated in the viiith chap. vers. 13, 14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days; and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." It is worthy of observation, that in all these passages the Redeemer's reign is spoken of as *commencing* with the destruction of the Roman empire. In the 21st verse it is said, "The same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given unto the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." This deserves particular attention. And I would remark here, that both in the Old and New Testament the reign of our Lord is ever spoken of as *subsequent* to the destruction of Antichrist, and *not prior* to that period. Thus, in the xxxist of Isaiah, where the destruction of the Assyrian is spoken of, it immediately follows, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." In the xxivth it is declared, that "in the day that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth that are on the earth," that "*then* the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and before his ancients gloriously." And in the following chapter the prophet speaks of the resurrection of the dead, and the advent of our Lord, as a *consequence* of the destruction of Moab, and makes it the precursor of millennial blessedness; and then follows the song of praise which "shall be sung in *that* day in the land of Judah" (xxv. 1—7).

There are many other passages of Scripture which speak to the same effect, but I shall refer at present but to one more as illustrative of this great truth. In the sixth of Revel. we have a most sublime description of the coming of the Just One: the battle of Armageddon ensues; the beast and the false prophet are taken; the infidel party, who are gathered together to make war with the Lamb, die, not the common death of all men, but they go down alive into hell, like the company of Dathan and Abiram; and the remnant are slain with the sword of

Him who sitteth on the horse, and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. On this, Satan is cast out; and then follows the millennial reign: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." This is the commencement of the Redeemer's reign, "whose kingdom shall have no end." Then shall it be said, in the language of the xlviii Psalm, "The Lord Most High is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth on the throne of his holiness." Most manifest it is, from these passages alone, that he that shall rule over men is the Just One; and that when he has completed his mediatorial office, and not before, he shall come forth from the most holy place, and pass from the priestly into the kingly office. He, having received the kingdom (as we are taught in the parable of the nobleman who went into a far country), shall return to set it up. (Dan. vii. 9, 10, 13, 14). Then he shall be King, yea, King of kings and Lord of lords. Then shall be understood the nature of that testimony which he bore before Pontius Pilate, when he said, "Art thou a king then?" and Jesus replied, "Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." This is the truth unto which Jesus bore testimony; and it is remarkable, that for this testimony he was put to death: for such was his *accusation* affixed to his cross, written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin; "*This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.*" What marvel, then, if those who now stand up for the truth should in like manner suffer persecution? The wonder would be if it were not so, for "the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord." But it is a consoling thought, that every one that is of the truth will attend to this (John xix. 37). And what if it be now especially brought forward, in these days of religious profession, as a test of discipleship? True it is that every sincere disciple of Jesus will "love his appearing" (3 Tim. iv. 8); will watch for his coming (Luke xii. 37; 1 Thess. i. 10); and will pray for it (Rev. xxii. 20). He will long to see the King in his beauty, to see him sit upon the throne of his glory, when this devil-possessed world shall be rescued from the enemy, and Christ shall bruise him under his feet; and therefore he prays God to quicken his coming; "That it may please thee of thy gracious goodness shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting glory: through Jesus Christ our Lord."

[FOR THE AMERICAN MILLENARIAN.]

NUMBER III—*Concluded.*

He says that the Millenarian interpretation of prophecy "does not meet the broad scope of prophecy as to the influence of the gospel on the children of men." What that is he leaves us to infer, viz. that it is the extension of the saving effects of religion over an entire world of mankind yet in the flesh. Be it so. The Millenarian interpretation finds full and glorious provision made for the universal happiness and holiness of the nations of the earth *yet living in the flesh*, under the peaceful and happy dominion of Jesus Christ, and of his raised and quickened saints. "John" has confounded the Millenarian's views with those of Mr. Miller, which are just as antagonistical, as they well can be. We are not concerned to show here what Millenarians believe; but "John" has never made himself acquainted with their writings: for if he had, he would not have made the gross and palpable misstatements he has done; nor have gone to the "Presbytery of the West," to quote a letter of one "who ought to know" as he says. We grieve in our inmost spirit to see such attempts to pervert truth, and we put it to the conscience of our brother, for such we will own him to be, to say, whether the inferences which he in his great ignorance draws from his mistaken views of those whom he condemns, and which are just as illegitimate in their *logical* character as they are unfounded in truth—should be attributed to them, and on such ground they and their views (not their real but alleged views), be charged with disparaging the spiritual presence of Christ, dishonouring the work of the Holy Spirit, falling short of the scope of the prophecy concerning the general prevalence of religion among men, making the *final* number of the *elect* people of God a small company, preventing the Saviour from seeing the travail of his soul and being satisfied, and diminishing the hope and encouragement of the church in labouring to spread the gospel. This writer needs to learn the very first elements of the Bible doctrine of Christ's Kingdom as embraced by the Millenarian faith. The quotations he has made about *all nations* flowing unto the mountain of God's house, the *abundance* of the number and *forces* of the Gentiles, &c. &c. are all taken out of their proper connexion, and stamped with his own preconceived notion of their meaning without being viewed in that connexion. To the law and the testimony. Let him study the mind of the spirit—take His language in its proper connexion, and according to the meaning in which He understood it, and not run away with a few general expressions separated from their proper relation and import, and interpret them according to a preconceived scheme of his own, unauthorized and unsupported by the word of God. Such liberty, taken with the language of the Bible, at one time tracing down its meaning, at another, generalizing—now mysticising, and now rendering it vague and ambiguous, resembles more the priest's method of interpreting the words of the priestess, when they gave forth the Oracles of Delphi, than a mere rational exposition of the word of God. Well has Bishop Horseley rebuked it; and would that Prof. Stuart

and Prof. Robinson, in *their* interpretations of prophecies had received and felt that rebuke; For the one in his Hints, and the other in his review of Dr. Grout's notions about the historian's being of Israelitish descent, in attempting to shew that the captivity of the ten tribes ceased, and the prophecies in relation to its termination were fulfilled in the migration of some of them, and their incorporation, with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, after the Babylonish captivity,—have rendered them both as expositors of prophecy fully deserving of it. The remark he makes with so much truth and point, applies previously to their mode of interpretation. "To interpret prophecy in that manner," says that learned and able writer, "is to make it little better than a paltry quibble—more worthy of the Delphic triphod, than of the Scripture of truth."

VINDEK.

The following extract is from a letter just received from one of the most distinguished preachers of the Free Protestant Church of Scotland, the *Rev. William Cousin*, Minister of the Boston Church, Dunse. I have thought that it might interest the readers of the *Millenarian*.

On one point, however, my esteemed correspondent has drawn a very hasty inference, and I shall certainly make it my business to set him right without delay. His mistake arises from forgetting that the *Presbytery of New York* is *not* the "Free Presbyterian church of America;" nor is he aware of what is now pretty well understood here, that the Presbytery itself rather shrinks from the fame, which the late decision has acquired. Not but that the most of those, who voted in the majority on that occasion, were strictly honest and conscientious in doing so. To these worthy brethren Millenarian truth was simply something altogether new; and that was sufficient to prove that it must needs be extremely heretical, especially when Dr. Spring* did not scruple to stake his long-established reputation for orthodoxy on the rejection of a man from ministerial fellowship, for avowing the *novelty* as his own belief. But no sooner was the deed done, than from various quarters glimmering suspicions began to dawn on them, which cruelly damped their Old School triumph and self-complacency; till at last, when the Rev. Classis of New York requested to be informed of *the reasons* of their procedure, it was solemnly "resolved," that to say any thing on that part of the subject was—"inexpedient." Of course; who doubts it? "*Inexpedient* to explain"—the common *ultima ratio* of ecclesiastical Courts in time of need; but it does not *always* follow, that those who resort to it are either *kings*, or tyrants.

Then again, the idea of the *Rev. Dr. Ichabod Spencer*, of Brooklyn, declaring that "he would not allow a Millenarian"—(the *Rev. Edward Bickersteth*, we shall suppose,) "to enter his pulpit;"—or of the *Rev. Samuel Irenaeus Prime*, (the Village Pastor who edits the *New York Observer*,† and who was the first to raise the hue and cry in the Presbytery), declaring that "he would infallibly stop the Millenarian in his

* This gentleman's grand argument, which he took care to enforce in all the varieties of bland and most persuasive intonation, was that "every Sabbath scholar, Sir, knows what is meant by *the end of the world*." Does Dr. Spring himself know what it means? Or does that master in our American Israel really "*think as a child, and speak as a child*" regarding that important Scripture phrase?

† One pretended cause of offence now is, that "Mr. L. had no charge"—a declaration, which was *not* true of the rejected applicant, but is perfectly true of several members of that presbytery

pulpit," (?) who should interpret the judgment scene in Mat. xxv, as all millenarians do—all this, it must be confessed, was in itself sufficiently affecting at the time. But surely it is not less pleasant now to mark the watchful assiduity, with which the reverend Editor, "wise in his generation," has lately seized every opportunity, as when noticing the works of Charlotte Elizabeth, or of the Rev. Hugh White, to assure his readers that Millenarianism is *not* to be regarded as a heresy—nay, that it is but an "unessential" difference of opinion.

Upon the whole, therefore, Mr. Cousin and his noble-minded associates must cheer up their spirits. We are not sure that Dr. Ichabod Spencer himself, when he comes to think over the matter, although we have not heard of his sharing in Mr. Prime's recent enlargement, would, after all, exclude from "his pulpit" either Mr. *Bickersteth*, or Dr. *Candlish*.—But now for the letter.

"Dunse, June 26th, 1843.
(past midnight.)

. It set my heart all a-beating with the rush of old recollections, when I opened up the news-paper you were so kind as to send me, and found as its marked and most prominent topic—*"Case of the Rev. John Lillie."* What is this? I thought—a trial of heresy?—and I hurried on to see the charge that was to darken the image of my oldest and most cherished College friend. "Personal Advent! Millenarianism!"—My dear Lillie, though it was but the oppressive suspicion of a moment, I felt great relief on reading the charge, which only drew around us another link of union, showing that, though separated so far and silent so long, we are still looking for the same blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"And the American Presbyterian Church deems it a sufficient ground of exclusion from communion to be found waiting for the consolation of Israel? In our more desponding hours during the days of our recent contendings for Christ's Crown and Covenant rights in this land, we used to dream sometimes of finding rest and refuge, if no where else, amidst the free presbyterian churches of America. But it would appear there were difficulties in our way on which we did not count. If *here* we have been hindered from recognizing Christ as our only King and Head in spiritual things, *there*, it would seem, we are forbidden to indulge the hope that He will ever come to claim the kingdoms as His own. Among those whom, if we are not deceived, they delight to honour, there are many believers in the Personal Advent and Reign of our blessed Lord upon the earth. Candlish is one who either is a millenarian already, or is fast verging towards it. No one can read his Exposition of Genesis without seeing that; and he is but one out of many.

"Sympathizing with you is so much, you will be surprised, I dare say, that I have not sooner acknowledged by some token of recognition, if not of sympathy, your two mementos. But the truth is, for the last many months we have been all a-stir—striking our tents preparatory to leaving the camp. You may well believe it has been a season of

incessant bustle and confusion, though, since the Convocation at which our resolution was fairly and finally taken, of great comfort and enlargement. And now that we are fairly out into the open field, I cannot tell you in what a different atmosphere we breathe. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers. The snare is broken, and we are escaped. The Lord in turning our captivity hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.

"I do not know, my dear L. what you, with your old Voluntary sentiments—of which you will be reminded by what I have just written—I do not know what you may think of all the various movements of our recent contendings. I doubt not you rejoice in the result. Perhaps if you still retain your former views, about which we used to bicker away so valiantly, you may think that the result of our conflict just shows, that Religious Establishments ought not, even as it seems they cannot, be maintained. I think that it only proves they cannot be had in *purity* in the present dark and disordered state of society, and never will perhaps till the Millennium, when all kingdoms and nations shall bring their glory unto Christ.

"It is marvellous what a few years have done—what a few months, what a few weeks have done. We have a glorious field, if God only give us grace to occupy it in faith and humility. From every quarter there is a cry for the preaching of the gospel. The old fastnesses of dead Moderatism are breaking up. The true light is shining in on points of darkness, where, for whole generations, they have been sitting under the shadow of death. We are called upon on every side to break up the fallow ground. The thirst for preaching is quite unexampled. We have means beyond our most sanguine expectations. Though still far short of what is needed for our building operations, in order to get under cover before winter, still we have abundant means, and anxious congregations on every side. Even in dead Berwickshire all we want is *men*. The harvest is truly plentiful; but the labourers are few—are far, far too few. Pray for your old native land, that the Lord of the harvest may send forth more labourers.

" I am, my dear L..

Yours most affectionately,

WILLIAM COUSIN.

P. S.—Need I ask you to write soon? *Let me know the result of your controversy.* W. C."

"When our Lord rode in triumph into Jerusalem, as if to claim his right to the title which was offered him and to the kingdom which he should one day occupy, he allowed Hosannas to be addressed to him by the multitude as king, and as he who should restore the kingdom of *their father David*. Now the kingdom which the Jews thought Jesus was to establish, was the literal kingdom of David—a delusion, if it had been such, which we cannot imagine for a moment that the Saviour would have suffered them to labour under, at the time when he was receiving honours from them in the very capacity of king over his kingdom: but of the time of its establishment he left them uninformed, as he did those who, on another occasion, questioned him on this subject; the times and the seasons not being for them to know. We thus find this transaction put in obvious connection with the express prophecies of David and Isaiah, the announcement of the angel, and the comment—"

The following extract, from the work entitled "*Practical Reflections on the Second Advent*, by the Rev. HUGH WURRE," will shew what deep injustice is done to the Millenarian system, by those who are fond of denouncing it as a fruitless speculation, and urge this as a reason why the mind of Christians should not be disturbed with the *novelty*, but rather be rooted and grounded in their present views, which are believed to be of more practical tendency. The author, having cited the passages in favour of the personal and pre-millennial Advent of Christ, next examines the "*Probable Reasons for the prominence given to this subject in Scripture.*" Under this, the title of Chapter III, he remarks as follows:

The prominent exhibition given to the second coming of the Son of God, in the Gospel scheme, may, I think, be in part accounted for by the consideration, that the habitual anticipation of this event is calculated, with peculiar power, to develop and cherish some of the most distinguishing, most exalted, and loveliest features of the Christian character—those, in which the essence of its divine beauty and glory pre-eminently consists—and this, in a three-fold point of view—1st, As regards the Redeemer: 2nd, As regards His Redeemed people: and 3rd, as regards the believer himself.

1.—As regards the Redeemer.

When once a sinner is convinced, by the divine teaching of the Holy Spirit, of the immensity of his obligations to the Saviour—that, but for that Saviour's love, immortality had been to him only an immortal curse, because throughout eternity, had it not been for all that Jesus suffered on his behalf, only one wild wish would have wrung his tortured soul—the wish that he had never been born—while, through the love displayed towards him, and the sufferings endured for him, by the Son of God, he hopes to be as happy, throughout eternity, as any created being can be, or can desire to be—there springs from this conviction in that sinner's heart, a sentiment of such gratitude to the Saviour, as colours the whole current of his future life—and turns it into a channel, in which the feelings and affections of the most amiable of the children of the world never flow.

He becomes, emphatically, a new creature—a new spirit is breathed into him—a new bias is given to every passion of his soul—a new bent is imparted to every affection of his heart—he lives for a new object—is stimulated by a new hope—and pants after a new happiness. In a word—"with him to live is Christ!" All his thoughts, desires, affections, are centered on Christ—all his aims, purposes, pursuits, are identified with Christ—all his hopes, joys, consolations, are derived from Christ. He is interested in nothing so deeply as his Redeemer's interest—rejoices in nothing so intensely, as meditating on and sharing his Redeemer's joy—glories in nothing so triumphantly, as contemplating and partaking his Redeemer's glory!

If he derives pleasure from the possession of any talent, which the bounty of his God has bestowed upon him, it is because he hopes he may be enabled, through the instrumentality of that talent, to glorify his beloved Redeemer's dear and precious name.

Now, whenever this supreme love to the Saviour is enthroned in the heart there flows from it a feeling, of the very conception of which the children of the world, as such, are utterly incapable, and yet a feeling the most elevating in its influence, and exalted in its enjoyment, of which the human mind is susceptible—I mean, what I might call, a disinterested delight in the contemplation of the Redeemer's own happiness and glory—not so much independently of, as distinct from, and over and above, the consideration of our being ourselves, if believers, (in right of our union and joint-heirship with Christ,) partakers of that happiness, and that glory.

This feeling, the most elevating and gladdening which a believer's heart can cherish, derives its sweetest and holiest influences, from the contemplation of the second coming of the Son of Man!

In that day He shall come in his own glory, and His Father's glory, and all the holy angels with Him; and then shall He sit upon the Throne of His glory! and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and all people shall do Him homage! Unto him *every knee*, either in crouching agony, or grateful adoration, *shall bow*; and every tongue, either trembling with terror, or triumphant with joy, *shall confess that He is Lord*—even Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, to the glory of God the Father.

It is *then* that the Divine Husbandman, who went through our world weeping, as He sowed the good seed of eternal life, shall come again, rejoicing with joy indeed unspeakable, bringing all His gathered sheaves to be laid up in His heavenly garner, in that harvest-day of glory.

It is *then* that the heavenly Bridegroom shall be solemnly united, before a mighty congregation of assembled angels, to his beloved bride, who shall be presented to Him on that morning of His espousals, “a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,” arrayed in the wedding garment, which He himself wrought for her, while He tabernacled upon earth—even the seamless robe of His own righteousness! Then shall the marriage-feast be celebrated with all the magnificence and rejoicing, which may be anticipated on such an august occasion, when the Bridegroom is the Son of God—the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the church, which He has bought with His own blood—and the marriage-feast is prepared by the everlasting Father, to show how he delighteth to honour His well-beloved Son.

This—this was the joy set before Him in heaven, for which he was well content to resign, for a time, the glories of His Eternal Throne, and to appear on earth, as One “despised and rejected of men;” yea, to be treated as a worm, and no man—the very scorn and outcast of the people. This—this the joy, for which He was even content to endure the cross, despising alike its sufferings and its shame.

Gleamings of this joy brightened, we doubt not, at passing intervals, the clouded path of humiliation and suffering, which the Divine Man of sorrows trod upon earth, as He toiled along in His mysterious pilgrimage of redeeming love.

Such glimpses, we may reverentially conclude, were vouchsafed to

Him that night, when He retired apart to a mountain to pray, and spent the whole night in prayer, preparatory to the appointment of those apostles, who were to sow that precious seed from which, when the harvest of the earth was ripe, He was to reap such abundant joy and glory. Such, too, when He stood, in the splendour of His divine majesty, on the mount of Transfiguration, and beheld in His glorified attendants, and rejoicing disciples, the pattern and prelude of the glory to be revealed in the day of His appearing, when His buried saints shall, like Moses, be raised with glorified bodies, and the living be caught up, like Elijah, to meet Him in the air.

And oh! what a bright prophetic dawn of this day of His glory must have burst around Him, on the morning of his resurrection! What sublime joy must have thrilled through the Redeemer's soul, when, on that morning, He arose from the dead, and coming out of the sepulchre, looked forth for the first time on a ransomed world—a world, on which its reconciled Creator's smile must then have seemed peacefully to rest.

And when, on that morning of His own resurrection, the Saviour, in the visions of futurity, beheld the myriads of immortal spirits, who, as being washed in His blood, and sanctified by His grace, should, on the morning of the resurrection of all His saints, appear with bodies glorified like His own, to swell the triumph, and participate in the happiness of the Lord, in that day—Oh! surely, in the anticipation of this glorious recompense of His sufferings and death, the spirit of the Son of God must have rejoiced with such joy, as only the infinite mind of Deity can fully comprehend.

But not more than as the glimmering of the first streak of dawning light, which proclaims the approach of the rising sun, compared with the full blaze of that sun in his meridian splendour, was even *this* joy, when compared with what the Redeemer will feel, on the day of His second coming, when He shall appear in the full blaze of His glory; and seated on that great white Throne, shall see Himself surrounded by the whole company of His redeemed people, the innumerable myriads of rejoicing heirs of glory! And as He looks forth from His Throne on the countless multitude, and reads in every countenance the unutterable fulness of joy and gratitude towards Himself that reigns in every heart, and hears from every voice the ascription of adoring thankfulness and praise to Himself, as the generous Benefactor, to whom they owe all their blessedness; oh, surely, in that moment, when, from ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of redeemed and rejoicing saints, eyes sparkling with more than angelic rapture are all fastened on *Him* in grateful love! and voices glowing with more than seraphic fire, are all pouring out before *Him* that sublime song of praise—“*Thou art worthy! for thou hast redeemed us unto God by Thy blood! to receive from us honour, and blessing, and praise, for ever and ever!*”—then, then, indeed, when, with the sight of all His people's happiness full before His view, and the sound of all their united voices rising in one full burst of rapture and praise upon

His ears; when he then remembers, that but for Himself, but for what He endured in Gethsemane's garden, and on Calvary's cross that countless multitude would be, at that moment lifting up their eyes in torments, and their voices in weeping and wailing, in all the anguish and horror of everlasting despair—Oh! *then indeed* will the Son of God see *fully* of the travail of his soul, and be *satisfied*, perfectly satisfied with *such* a recompense for even His agony and bloody sweat—even the ignominious and accursed death on the cross!

Reader! dost thou hope to be one of that rejoicing multitude? Dost thou hope to mingle thy voice in that chorus of thanksgiving from all the assembled congregation of His saints? Oh, then, does not thy heart burn within thee, with a glow of *such* happiness, as in one sense surpasses the bliss of angels, at the thought of what the Redeemer—even thine own Redeemer—will feel, in that day of His appearing! Dost thou not find it very sweet to thy soul to forget for a while all thy sorrows, be they dark and desolating as they may, and thus, by the anticipating power of faith, to enter into the joy of the Lord?

Now, I cannot but believe, that the habit of thus entering into the joy of our Lord, by the habitual contemplation of the joy awaiting Him on the day of His second coming, would, if we supremely love, confidently trust, and devotedly serve Him, be attended with most valuable and delightful results. It would pour into our hearts a happiness, not merely immeasurably superior to the best the world can give—(for this, after all is but poor praise,)—but even surpassing, in purity, sweetness, and sublimity, what flows into a believer's heart from any other Christian source; and one which will be perpetually deepening and enlarging, just in proportion as that feeling, in which the very essence of a believer's happiness consists—gratitude to a Saviour-God, is deepened and enlarged.

It would present the Saviour's character under its most attractive aspect, as identifying, Himself with His own people, glorified in their glory, rejoicing in their joy; and this, when realized, through the power of the Holy Spirit, must endear the Saviour to our hearts; stir up within our souls the depths of every generous and grateful affection towards Him; increase our cheerful trust in His loving-kindness, and our cheerful contentedness with *all* His appointments, even though some of them may be very agonizing to flesh and blood; because we could not at one and the same time believe, that, in the day of His appearing, He will rejoice in witnessing, and bestowing on us the blessedness He Himself purchased for us with His own blood, and yet that He could now take pleasure in witnessing, much less appointing, our sufferings, *unless so far* as He designs them to be instrumental in making us meet to be partakers of the triumphs of that day. And *such* a view of our trials goes far to enable us to welcome them with joyful salutations, saying to them—"Blessed are ye, for ye come in the name of the Lord!"

And when we consider what a sanctifying influence this habitual contemplation would exercise over our character and conduct; because, if we cordially rejoiced to anticipate our dear Redeemer's joy, we could

not without palpable inconsistency, forbear as cordially to rejoice, by every means in our power, to be instrumental in promoting it—(and oh! what a life of holiness and watchfulness over ourselves, and of zeal and labours of love towards all around, would *this* produce)—and when we further reflect, how all these prospects, with their accompanying influences, are associated *peculiarly* with the day of Christ's second coming, we may see a probable reason, why in Scripture this day is so prominently exhibited, as the object, to be constantly present to the believer's view—the hope, to be constantly treasured in the believer's heart!

Just published and for sale at this Office, "A SOBER ENQUIRY; OR, CHRIST'S REIGN WITH HIS SAINTS A THOUSAND YEARS, together with the answer of most of those ordinary objections which are usually urged to the contrary." First American from the third London Edition. Price 50 cents.

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